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1989/06/22

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PAGE 01 OF 03 BEIJIN 16246 00 OF 05 220152Z 2126 EAP3735
ACTION EAP-08

BEIJIN 16246 00 OF 05 220152Z 2126 EAP3735

ACTION OFFICE C11-05

INFO 1-05 TC-01 P-01 RA-01 LAB-01 UN-01 EAP-05 /020 AS DDX

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-01 EUR-00 SS-00 OIC-02 CIAE-00
R-01 ID-10 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 SSO-00 NA-03 L-03
TRSE-00 PH-10 AIT-02 PA-01 OMB-01 INRE-00 CA-02
SP-02 SMP-01 PRS-01 DS-00 P-02 T-01 /065 V

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACI IMMEDIATE 1411
USIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0551
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
FMEMBASSY BANGKOK 0422
AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE
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AMCONSUL SHANGHAI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SHENYANG IMMEDIATE
DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CHENGDU POUCH

FILE

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NSC FOR DOUG PAAL

CINCPAC FOR FPA

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, SOCI, CH
SUBJECT: WHAT HAPPENED ON THE NIGHT OF JUNE 3/89

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. (C) INTRODUCTION:

ACCORDING TO
OFFICIAL PRESS REPORTS, PLA TROOPS AND SECURITY
FORCES EMPLOYED MAXIMUM RESTRAINT IN MOVING INTO THE
CITY CENTER, ONLY FIRING WHEN THREATENED BY GROUPS OF
VIOLENT "COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES." OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS
NATURALLY STRESS THE VIOLENCE WITH WHICH GROUPS OF
CITIZENS ATTACKED AND/OR KILLED SOLDIERS.

3. (C) IN THE FOLLOWING NARRATIVE AND CHRONOLOGY,
THE EMBASSY ATTEMPTS TO SET THE RECORD STRAIGHT. OUR
NARRATIVE IS BASED ON EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS OF EMOFFS,
WESTERN DIPLOMATS, WESTERN REPORTERS AND AMERICAN
STUDENTS PRESENT ON OR NEAR TIANANMEN SQUARE, AND ON
CREDIBLE SECOND HAND INFORMATION. WE CONCLUDE THAT,
CONTRARY TO A NUMBER OF EARLY WESTERN PRESS ACCOUNTS,
THE MASSACRE TOOK PLACE ON CHANGAN AVENUE AND OTHER
OF BEIJING'S MAIN THOROUGHFARES RATHER THAN IN
TIANANMEN SQUARE ITSELF. MANY -- IF NOT MOST -- OF
THE DEATHS OCCURRED AS THE MILITARY MOVED TOWARD THE

SQUARE FROM THE WEST.

4. THE PLA DID NOT FIRE DIRECTLY ON STUDENTS
GATHERED AROUND THE MARTYR'S MONUMENT ON TIANANMEN
SQUARE. TROOPS BEAT, AND PROBABLY KILLED SOME
STUDENTS AFTER THEY EXITED THE SQUARE, HOWEVER.
OTHER STUDENTS WHO FACED OFF TROOPS IN THE STREETS
AROUND THE SQUARE WERE SHOT. MANY MEMBERS OF THE
CROWDS ATTEMPTING TO SLOW THE PLA ADVANCE THREW
BRICKS AND STONES AT SOLDIERS AND BEAT AND/OR KILLED
A NUMBER OF THEM. BUT GIVEN THE PREPONDERANCE OF
FORCE ON THE MILITARY SIDE, IT IS INCONCEIVABLE THAT
MILITARY CASUALTIES EXCEEDED THOSE ON THE CIVILIAN
SIDE. CIVILIAN DEATHS PROBABLY DID NOT REACH THE
FIGURE OF 3,000 USED IN SOME PRESS ACCOUNTS, BUT THEY
SURELY FAR OUTNUMBERED OFFICIAL FIGURES.

5. IT SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND THAT WHATEVER THE
CASUALTY FIGURES, WHATEVER THE OCCUPATION OF THE
CIVILIANS WHO WERE KILLED, AND HOWEVER VIOLENT SOME
MEMBERS OF THE CROWD MAY HAVE BECOME, THE ORDER TO
MOVE HEAVILY ARMED TROOPS ON TIANANMEN WAS CYNICAL
AND INHUMAN.

END INTRODUCTION.

6. (C) PRECIS OF EVENTS: THE MAIN MILITARY THRUST
THAT NIGHT CAME FROM THE WEST. LARGE CROWDS ENGAGED
IN PITCHED BATTLES WITH ARMED TROOPS AND ARMORED
COLUMNS AT MAJOR INTERSECTIONS ALONG FUXING AND
CHANGAN AVENUES. THESE CLASHES LED TO HIGH CIVILIAN
CASUALTIES AS TROOPS FIRED DIRECTLY AT BEIJING
CITIZENS.

7. (C) SOLDIERS IN AN ARMORED COLUMN OF TANKS AND
APC'S THAT ENTERED TIANANMEN FROM THE EAST AFTER
(04) JUNE 4 ALSO FIRED INDISCRIMINATELY AT
CROWDS ALONG THE ROUTE.

8. BATTLES BETWEEN TROOPS AND
CITIZENS ALSO APPARENTLY TOOK PLACE SOUTH OF
TIANANMEN SQUARE, PROBABLY AT THE CHONGWENMEN
INTERSECTIONS AND ALONG QIANMEN AVENUE. WE HAVE ALSO
HEARD OF HEAVY FIGHTING IN THE DAZHALAN DISTRICT,
JUST SOUTH OF QIANMEN. WE HAVE NO WESTERN EYEWITNESS
ACCOUNTS OF THE EVENTS AT CHONGWENMEN, QIANMEN
AVENUE, AND DAZHALAN, HOWEVER.

9. (C) CASUALTIES ALSO OCCURRED IN THE TIANANMEN
AREA AFTER TROOPS AND ARMOR ARRIVED AT THE NORTH END
OF THE SQUARE SOMETIME BETWEEN 0133 AND 0200,
JUNE 4. HERE, CROWDS ON CHANGAN AVENUE ON THE
NORTHEAST SIDE OF THE SQUARE FACED OFF TROOPS WHO HAD
ENTERED FROM THE NORTHWEST. TROOPS FIRED DIRECTLY AT
THIS CROWD THROUGHOUT THE MORNING BETWEEN TIANANMEN
SQUARE AND THE BEIJING HOTEL.

10. (C) THE BATTLES RAGED AROUND THE SQUARE RATHER
THAN ON IT. WITNESSES PRESENT AT THE MARTYR'S
MONUMENT DESCRIBE AN EERIE LACK OF ACTION ON THE
SQUARE PROPER DURING THE SHOOTING IN THE STREETS. WE
HAVE HEARD NO ACCOUNTS OF SOLDIERS FIRING DIRECTLY AT
STUDENTS CROWDED AROUND THE MARTYR'S MONUMENT ON THE
SQUARE. EYEWITNESSES ALSO STATE THAT, AS FAR AS THEY
COULD TELL, NO STUDENTS WERE PRESENT IN THE TENTS

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PAGE 02 OF 03 BEIJING 16846 02 OF 05 220152Z
WHICH APC'S ROLLED OVER AS THEY ENTERED THE SQUARE
PROPER BEFORE SUN RISE ON JUNE 4. THE SEVERAL
THOUSAND STUDENTS WHO REMAINED AT THE MONUMENT
DEPARTED THE SQUARE VIA THE SOUTHEAST CORNER
BEGINNING AT ABOUT 0500, JUNE 4.

2126 EAP3735

BEIJING 16846 02 OF 05 220152Z

2126 EAP3735

10. (C) EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS OF WHAT HAPPENED TO THE
STUDENTS ONCE THEY LEFT ARE FEW. WESTERN JOURNALISTS
WHO WERE PRESENT OR WHO HEARD FROM EYEWITNESSES AGREE
THAT STUDENTS DEPARTED VIA THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF
THE SQUARE ONTO QIANMEN AVENUE. THEY THERE SPLIT
INTO GROUPS, SOME OF WHICH TRAVELLED EAST, SOME WEST.

11. (C) JOURNALISTS PRESENT ON THE SQUARE AT THIS
TIME STATE THAT POLICE OR PLA TROOPS IN RIOT GEAR
BEAT SOME OF THE DEPARTING STUDENTS. AN EYEWITNESS
TOLD AN AMERICAN JOURNALIST THAT TANKS MOVING WEST ON
CHANGAN AVENUE RAN OVER AND KILLED ABOUT TEN STUDENTS
WHO MARCHED WEST FROM THE SQUARE AND THEN NORTH TO
THE VICINITY OF THE BEIJING CONCERT HALL. THE
EYEWITNESS TOLD THE JOURNALIST THAT SOLDIERS SHOT AND
KILLED AT LEAST ONE OF THE STUDENTS ACCOMPANYING
THOSE WHO WERE RUN OVER BY THE TANKS.

12. (C) CASUALTIES: WE MAY NEVER KNOW PRECISELY HOW
MANY TROOPS AND CIVILIANS DIED OR WERE INJURED ON THE
NIGHT OF JUNE 3/4 AND IN FOLLOWING DAYS. THE TRUE
FIGURE IS PROBABLY OVER ONE THOUSAND; NOT OVER ONE
HUNDRED, AS CHINESE OFFICIALS CLAIM. SOON AFTER THE
MASSACRE, THE NYGDO NEWS SERVICE REPORTED THAT THE
CHINESE RED CROSS GAVE A FIGURE OF 2,629 MILITARY AND
CIVILIAN DEATHS WITH 7,000 ON BOTH SIDES WOUNDED,
BASED ON A CENSUS OF BEIJING HOSPITALS. (NOTE:
THESE DEATHS WERE RECORDED IN HOSPITALS AND
REPORTEDLY DO NOT INCLUDE DEATHS ON THE STREET. END
NOTE.) BEIJING BASED JAPANESE DIPLOMATS FIND THE
NYGDO SOURCE CREDIBLE AND THE ESTIMATE CONVINCING.

OUR BAO BELIEVES THAT THIS IS NOT AN UNREASONABLE
ESTIMATE, GIVEN THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT AND THE
WEAPONS USED BY THE PLA.

13. (C) OFFICIAL CASUALTY STATISTICS DIFFER MARKEDLY
FROM THIS, BUT THEY ARE CONTRADICTORY. AT A JUNE 7
PRESS CONFERENCE, STATE COUNCIL SPOKESMAN YUAN MU
STATED THAT TOTAL DEATHS OF TROOPS AND CIVILIANS
NUMBERED "AROUND 300 PEOPLE." ACCORDING TO YUAN,
"OVER 3,000 TROOPS" SUFFERED INJURIES, WITH "OVER
2,000" CIVILIANS INJURED. HOWEVER, A JUNE 14 XINHUA
RELEASE REPORTED THAT "NEARLY 100 SOLDIERS AND
POLICEMEN (44) AND THOUSANDS OF SOLDIERS AND
POLICEMEN WERE WOUNDED." "SOME 100 CIVILIANS WERE
KILLED AND NEARLY 1,000 WERE INJURED," ACCORDING TO
XINHUA.

14. BEIJING HOSPITALS HAVE BEEN UNWILLING TO DISCUSS
CASUALTY FIGURES. (EMBOFFS VISITING THREE HOSPITALS
ON THE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 4 WITNESSED OR WERE TOLD OF
A TOTAL OF 80 CIVILIAN DEAD AT THESE THREE HOSPITALS
ALONE. AMONG THE DEAD WERE WOMEN AND AT LEAST ONE
CHILD. A WESTERN JOURNALIST WHO VISITED SEVEN
HOSPITALS BETWEEN JUNE 4 AND JUNE 7, INCLUDING THOSE
VISITED BY EMBOFFS, WAS TOLD OF 156 CIVILIAN DEATHS
AT THESE HOSPITALS. THESE FIGURES ARE NECESSARILY
LOW, GIVEN OUR INABILITY TO VISIT HOSPITALS
SYSTEMATICALLY.

15. (C) STUDENT DEATHS: AT HIS JUNE 7 PRESS

CONFERENCE, YUAN MU CLAIMED THAT AS OF THAT DAY, ONLY
23 BEIJING STUDENTS HAD DIED AS A RESULT OF THE
MILITARY MOVEMENT ON THE CITY'S CENTER. HE SAID THAT
THIS FIGURE RESULTED FROM INVESTIGATIONS AT LOCAL
UNIVERSITIES. WESTERN JOURNALISTS WHO HAVE VISITED
MAJOR BEIJING CAMPUSES HAVE FOUND THAT STUDENT
SOURCES CAN CONFIRM BY NAME THE DEATHS OF ONLY 3-10
STUDENTS AT EACH OF SEVERAL MAJOR UNIVERSITIES, BUT A
WESTERN ACADEMIC WAS TOLD BY PROFESSORS THAT A LARGER
NUMBER OF STUDENTS ARE STILL UNACCOUNTED FOR (E.G.,
17 EACH AT BEIJING AND GINGYI UNIVERSITIES). THE
STATE COUNCIL HAS RELEASED NO FIGURES ON THE DEATHS
OF STUDENTS WHO FROM UNIVERSITIES OUTSIDE THE
CAPITAL. THE NON-BEIJING STUDENTS FORMED THE
MAJORITY OF STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS IN THE SQUARE
ITSELF BY JUNE 3.

16. (C) BELOW IS A CHRONOLOGY OF THE EVENTS OF THE
NIGHT OF JUNE 3/4. BEGIN CHRONOLOGY:

JUNE 3

1500 LARGE CROWDS OF BEIJING CITIZENS AROUND
TIANANMEN SQUARE; SEVERAL THOUSAND UNARMED
PLA TROOPS HELMED IN BY CROWDS AT WEST GATE
OF GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE (GAP)
1600 VIOLENCE FLARES AT XINBUANEN SOUTH
ENTRANCE TO ZHONGNANHAI AS TROOPS GUARDING
GATE FIRE INTO AIR AND BEAT SOME
DEMONSTRATORS WITH BELTS
1800 PLA TROOPS FIRE ON CROWD SURROUNDING TROOP
TRUCKS AT MUXIDI, NEAR FUXINGMEN; NUMBER
OF CASUALTIES UNKNOWN
2000 CROWDS ENCIRCLE CONVOY OF 20-30 TRUCKS

- BEARING ARMED TROOPS AT JIANGUOCHEN AND
- AND THIRD RING ROAD, THIS SCENE REPEATED
- ON MAJOR INTERSECTIONS SURROUNDING CITY
2100 TROOPS AT WEST GATE OF GAP RETREAT INSIDE
2200 TROOPS ON TRUCKS AT YANJING HOTEL, BETWEEN
MUXIDI AND FUXINGMEN, FIRE ON CROWDS IN
STREET, CASUALTIES UNKNOWN
2300 ARMED PLA TROOPS IN TRUCKS SURROUNDED BY
CROWDS IN FRONT OF BEIJING HOTEL

JUNE 4

0900 BUS BLOCKADE AT FUXINGMEN BURN, PLA FIRES
ON CROWDS, COLUMN OF APC'S APPROACHES
FUXINGMEN, AT LEAST 30 CASUALTIES REPORTED
REPORTED AT THIS SITE
POLICE OR TROOPS IN RIOT GEAR WITH SHIELDS
ENGAGE IN PITCHED BATTLE WITH CROWD OF OVER
10,000 PEOPLE IN FRONT OF MINZU HOTEL;
CROWD COMPOSED OF PEOPLE OF ALL AGES AND
SEXES; THEY JEER AT RIOT POLICE, SOME
THROW BRICKS AND STONES, RIOT POLICE
RESPOND WITH SMALL ARMS FIRE ABOVE CROWD
AND TEAR GAS

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S/S-0
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PAGE 03 OF 03 BEIJIN 16846 00 OF 05 220152Z 2176

SS08493

- SEXES; THEY JEER AT RIOT POLICE, SOME
- THROW BRICKS AND STONES, RIOT POLICE
- RESPOND WITH SMALL ARMS FIRE ABOVE CROWD
- AND TEAR GAS
/

- CROWD DISPERSES AS INFANTRY LINE AVENUE TO
- SECURE LANE FOR APPROACHING APC'S; MEMBERS
- OF CROWD STILL LINING AVENUE THROW ROCKS
- AND FIRE BOMBS, INFANTRY RESPONDS WITH
- DIRECT FIRE; CASUALTIES WITNESSED, BUT
- NUMBERS UNKNOWN
/

0000- FIRST TWO APC'S ENTER VICINITY OF TIANANMEN
0030 SQUARE
/

0100 DEMONSTRATORS SET AFIRE ONE APC NORTH OF
- SQUARE ON CHANGAN AVENUE; FIRST OFFICIAL
- WARNINGS TO LEAVE SQUARE BROADCAST OVER
- TIANANMEN PA SYSTEM; COLUMN OF APC'S
- FROM WEST PASSES ZHONGNANKAI
/

0150 INFANTRY HEADING FOR SQUARE PASSES NORTH
- GATE OF GHOP, FIRES DIRECTLY ON LARGE CROWD
- GATHERED ON CHANGAN AVENUE NORTH OF SQUARE;
- CROWD RETREATS EAST, MANY CASUALTIES
- REPORTED, BUT NUMBERS UNKNOWN
/

0200 MAJORITY OF STUDENTS REMAINING AT SQUARE
- GATHER AT BASE OF MARTYRS MONUMENT, (MSOFF
- ESTIMATES THEIR NUMBER AT 5,000; RELIABLE
- WESTERN DIPLOMAT WITNESSES "MANY"
- DEMONSTRATORS WITH SEVERE HEAD AND CHEST
- WOUNDS CARRIED OFF CHANGAN AVENUE
/

0210 "SUICIDE BUS" HEADS WEST ON CHANGAN FOR
- APPROACHING ARMOR COLUMN
/

0300 STUDENTS REQUEST NEGOTIATIONS WITH PLA;
- ARMED INFANTRY ENTERS SQUARE FROM SOUTHWEST
- TO ENTER GHOP; THEY ARE JEERED BY
- CROWDS
/

0330- STUDENTS VOTE TO LEAVE SQUARE
/

0430

0400 SEVERAL THOUSAND ARMED PLA TROOPS APPEAR ON
- EAST STEPS OF GHOP, THEIR BAYONETS
- FIXED; PLA OR PEOPLE'S ARMED POLICE UNITS
- ALSO APPEAR ON STEPS OF HISTORY MUSEUM
- ARMED WITH TRUNCHEONS
/

- LIGHTS OUT ON TIANANMEN SQUARE
/

0430- APC'S THAT ENTERED FROM THE WEST NOW LINED
0445 UP AT THE GATE OF HEAVENLY PEACE FACING
- SOUTH; THEY BEGIN TO MOVE INTO THE SQUARE
- PROPER, RUNNING OVER STUDENT TENTS
/

- SOUND OF HEAVY FIRE REPORTED FROM SOUTHEAST
- OF SQUARE; COULD HAVE COME FROM
- CHONGWENMEN AREA, WHERE HEAVY FIGHTING AND
- MANY CASUALTIES WERE LATER REPORTED
/

0420 LIGHTS ON IN SQUARE
/

0430 TROOPS OR POLICE IN RIOT GEAR APPEAR WITHIN
- GROUNDS OF MAO MAUSOLEUM, SOUTH OF MONUMENT

PAGE 01

BEIJIN 16846 00 OF 05 220152Z 2176

SS08493

0500- STUDENTS BEGIN TO LEAVE MONUMENT FOR
0530 SOUTHEAST END OF SQUARE AND EXIT FROM THERE
- ONTO QIANMEN AVENUE; SOME MOVE EAST, OTHERS
- WEST
/

0500 TANKS ENTER TIANANMEN SQUARE FROM SOUTH
/

0510 "GODDESS OF LIBERTY" STATUE IS DOWN
/

0545 ARMORED COLUMN OF 8 TANKS, 25 APC'S, AND
- MANY TROOP TRUCKS ENTERS TIANANMEN FROM THE
- EAST; ELEMENTS OF THIS COLUMN FIRE HEAVILY
- AND INDISCRIMINATELY AT CROWDS GATHERED
- ALONG CHANGAN AVENUE
/

0600 LAST STUDENTS DEPART SQUARE, SOME BEATEN BY
- TROOPS IN RIOT GEAR
/

0620 ANOTHER ARMORED COLUMN ENTERS TIANANMEN
- FROM THE EAST; ITS TROOPS ALSO FIRE
- INDISCRIMINATELY AT CROWDS
/

0650 APPROXIMATELY 35 TANKS ENTER SQUARE
/

1025- FOUR SEPARATE INCIDENTS OF INDISCRIMINATE
1210 FIRE ON CROWDS IN FRONT OF BEIJING HOTEL;
- AT LEAST 50 CIVILIAN CASUALTIES
/

END CHRONOLOGY.
/

17. NOTE: SPORADIC KILLING CONTINUED AT LEAST
THROUGH WEDNESDAY, JUNE 6. WE HAVE HEARD NUMEROUS
FIRST AND SECOND-HAND REPORTS OF SOLDIERS FIRING ON
GROUPS OF STUDENTS AND OTHER CITIZENS WHO EXPRESSED
OPPOSITION TO THE CRACKDOWN. LILLEY

NOTE: (00) OMISSION PARA. 7 AND 13, CORRECTION TO FOLLOW.

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